

Chronology

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Sowing the Seeds of Prevention (1977-1984)

1977 - Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) sets up ***Children's Services Division*** to reform the disjointed services for children in Ontario.

1978 - The Children's Services Division (CSD) publishes ***Program Priorities for Children's Services***, which identifies prevention as the #1 priority.

- Malcolm Shookner (MS), policy advisor in MCSS, spearheaded the development of these priorities, which were championed by Judge George Thomson and Dr. Clive Chamberlain.

1979 – The CSD publishes ***The State of the Art: A Background Paper on Prevention*** to describe its approach to prevention.

- Paper authored by Dr. Naomi Rae-Grant, with contributions from Marna Ramsden, Bob Glass, Bob Penney, Doug Brown, Jim MacNiven, and MS
- MS drafted a Scenario for a Community Prevention Program, illustrating both the community-wide and developmental milestone approaches to prevention
- MCSS designates \$1 million fund for demonstration and research projects, as well as supplementary grants for agencies involved in primary prevention.
- Prevention projects underway at that time (over 30), including:

Child Care Networks (Toronto), School for Parents (St. Catharines), Jane-Finch Community and Family Centre (North York), Training and Prevention Program (Dellcrest – North York), Windsor Early ID Project, Parent Preschool Resource Centre (Ottawa), L'il Beavers (Cochrane, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie), Otherways (Hastings and Prince Edward Counties).

1982 – ***Prevention Congress I*** at York University, sponsored by Dellcrest Children's Centre, Bryan Hayday (BH) a key organizer. Over 100 people in attendance.

- **Ontario Prevention Network** is formed to link the various projects together and create a “constituency for prevention.” It includes both community-based and agency-based projects.
- **Public Health in the ‘80s** report identifies “health promotion” as the way of the future in public health.

1983

- **Prevention Congress II** - Toronto.
- Initial discussion regarding provincial resource centre focused on primary prevention.

1984

- Healthy Cities movement was first conceived in Canada in 1984 as a result of the **Healthy Toronto 2000: Beyond Health Care** symposium
- Office of Health Promotion is established in the Ministry of Health.
- Two provincial ministries are now in the picture
- Feasibility survey conducted province-wide regarding a resource centre/information clearinghouse on primary prevention.
 - MS, BH and Myrna Francis (among others) test the waters for the “prevention constituency.”
- Proposal submitted to MCSS and MOH regarding **Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse** (OPC).
 - Proposal drafted at my dining room table, with BH and MF

"Prevention - an idea whose time had come..." (1985 - 1989)

1985

OPC began as a network of social service providers and community workers who were attempting to put more emphasis on preventing child and family mental health problems rather than continually treating them. This expanded to include public/community health workers who wanted professionals and organizations to take direct action around the conditions that influence health and well-being. At the same time, provincial reports and federal initiatives were generating ideas around understanding health in communities.

- **Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse** receives project funding to March 31, 1986, with governmental option to renew contract to March 31, 1987. The purpose was to increase province-wide awareness of prevention alternatives by providing information exchange within the emerging field of prevention.
- Board of Directors established
 - **List Board members**
- BH is the first staff person of OPC as Executive Director.
- Ministry of Education joins Clearinghouse Provincial Advisory Committee. Three ministries now supporting prevention, moving it toward the mainstream of human services.
- Established an office at the Ontario Mental Health Association

- MS and BH “interview” Howard Richardson at CMHA about being provincial sponsor
 - Peggy Schultz hired as the first Consultant for OPC
- Decision made to put emerging Information Technology at the core of the operation – databases, e-mail
 - Steering Committee uses e-mail to communicate, based on an experimental network established at the University of Calgary to provide communication for people with disabilities.
 - Puts OPC on the leading edge of development, where it stays through the turbulent '90s and into the next millennium.

1986

- **Healthy Cities** movement launched in Europe by the World Health Organization
 - The healthy cities movement was defined as “healthy communities” in Canada because so many Canadians do not live in cities.
- **Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion** is published
 - Health promotion is defined as “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.”
 - Five strategies for health promotion include healthy public policies and strengthening community action
- Development of an information centre on prevention programs, resources, research and contacts.
- Initiated databases of requests, programs and mailing lists to support information exchange and networking across Ontario, including publication of the Newsletter (in English and French).
- **Social Assistance Review Commission** established under leadership of George Thomson.

1987

- External evaluation of Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse, as directed by MCSS and MOH. **Prevention Congress III** - Kitchener.
- With emergence of health promotion out of the public health system in the '80s, debate ensues about the relationship of prevention to health promotion and the roles of MCSS and MoH.

1988

- OPC proposal to MoH to expand health promotion information and consultation services. Funded in 1988 for two years, conditional upon external evaluation, including regional focus groups and workshops to increase networking and visibility.
- Health promotion takes on more prominence as MCSS commitment to prevention stagnates.
- Social Assistance Review Commission report, **Transitions**, provides a blueprint for social assistance reform.

1989

- **Prevention Congress IV** - Toronto.
- Funding of **Better Beginnings, Better Futures** (BBBF) launched as a major primary prevention program.
 - MS consults with MCSS on design of the program;
 - key feature, community-wide programs in high-risk communities, rather than targeted programs.
 - 5 year funding program established
- The Healthy Communities movement gains recognition and momentum
 - First (and only) **Canadian Healthy Communities Conference** held in Montreal
 - Trevor Hancock becomes champion for healthy communities in Canada and at the World Health Organization
- Determinants of Health are recognized as non-medical factors that contribute to health and illness.

OPC Moves Upstream (the 1990s)

1990

- **Social Assistance Reform Coalition** (SARC) is launched to educate and create support of public and corporate leaders for Social Welfare Reform.
 - Poverty recognized as a leading cause of poor health
 - OPC plays a leading role in organizing a campaign to gain public support for reform – “Invest \$400 million” campaign
 - BH provides leadership
- **Best Start Project** funded in pilot communities.
- **French Language Services** developed and established at OPC.
 - Become a mainstay of OPC programs and services, with commitment to bilingual capacity.

1991

- Better Beginnings Better Futures consultation conducted on behalf of MCSS.

1992

- **Prevention Congress V** - London.
- **Transitions: Corporate Strategies** receives funding from Ontario.
- **Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition** formed.
 - OPC provides sponsorship and a home for it
 - Trevor Hancock is chair of coalition
 - Social, health, environment and CED sectors at the table
 - Municipalities play a key role

1994

- opc.on.ca on the Internet; home page under construction.
- **Prevention Congress VI** - Toronto.

- Conference on ***Building Healthy Sustainable Communities Together***, held in Picton, co-sponsored by Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, Ontario Social Development Council, Green Communities Initiative, Ontario Community Economic Development Alliance and Ontario Roundtable on Environment and Economy.
 - Introducing concept of “sustainability” to communities, inspired by the Earth Summit in 1992

1995

- ***Transitions: Corporate Strategies*** completes successful pilot; meets 70% employment target.
- ***Centre ontarien d'information en prévention*** (COIP) completes voluntary designation process under French Language Services Act.
- ***UN World Summit on Social Development*** introduces “sustainable human development” as the relationship among social, economic and environmental aspects of development – the central theme of the healthy communities movement.
 - Convergence of concepts from social, health, economic and environmental realms
- The federal budget ends the ***Canada Assistance Plan*** and funding for post-secondary education – the CHST is created to replace them
 - \$7 billion taken out of federal transfers to the provinces for social programs, including prevention.
- ***“Common Sense Revolution”*** takes power in June 1995
 - Within 90 days, millions slashed from social programs across the province
 - Cessation of funding for ***Transitions: Corporate Strategies*** (Sept)
- The ***Quality of Life Index for Ontario*** is launched by the Ontario Social Development Council and the Social Planning Network of Ontario to measure the impact of changes in public policies on the quality of life in communities.
 - Funded, in part, by Health Canada
 - Quality of life defined as “the interplay of social, health, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to human and social development.”

1996

- ***Transitions: Corporate Strategies*** ceases operations (January 1996).
- ***Cessation of core funding for OPC*** by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS).
- Incorporated as OPC-COIP Inc., established ***Innovaction*** as an affiliate, non-profit, fee-for-service consulting organization.
- ***Prevention Congress VII*** – Ottawa – Open Space Technology used

1997

- ***Voices for Children*** launched

- Alliance with the **Centre for Health Promotion**, University of Toronto formalized.
- Listserv **Click4HP** started.
- **Ontario Health Promotion Email Bulletin** (OHPE) created.

1998

- **Prevention Congress VIII** - Hamilton, hosted in collaboration with the Canadian Pediatric Society.
- A small band of Canadian NGOs travels to Geneva to challenge Canada's record on human rights during the 50th anniversary celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
 - led by Low Income Families Together (Josephine Grey).
 - MS also in the delegation, representing the Ontario Social Development Council.

1999

- **Ontario Health Promotion Resource Centre System** development - OPC provides lead role in development and implementation of on-line collaboration among 12 health promotion resource centres.
- Social determinants of health increasingly recognized as framework for action

Enter the New Millennium (the 2000s)

2000

- MS moves to Halifax, takes up position with Population Health Research Unit at Dalhousie University
- OPC's affiliate partner **Innovation** ceased operations in December 2000, resulting in infrastructure challenges for OPC.
- **Common Sense Revolution** re-elected
 - Health promoters and social activists brace for 4 more years of cuts to social programs

2001

- Connie Clement hired as Executive Director; Bryan Hayday (founding ED) resigned.

2002

- **Social Determinants of Health across the Lifespan** – Conference at York
 - over 400 Canadian social and health policy experts, community representatives, and health researchers met at York University in Toronto, Canada to consider the state of ten key social or societal determinants of health across Canada; explore the implications of these conditions for the health of Canadians; and outline policy directions to improve the health of Canadians by influencing the quality of these determinants of health. The conference took place

at a time when Canadian social and health policies were undergoing profound changes related to shifting political, economic, and social conditions

- The conference was also a response to accumulating evidence that growing social and economic inequalities among Canadians are contributing to higher health care costs and other social burdens.
- Evidence was also accumulating that a high level of poverty – an outcome of the growing gap between rich and poor – has profound societal effects as poor children are at higher risk for health and learning problems in childhood, adolescence, and later life, and are less likely to achieve their full potential as contributors to Canadian society
- Social determinants of health are being weakened by short-sighted governmental policymaking.
- As a result of the conference, the **Toronto Charter on the Social Determinants of Health** was developed as a tool for promoting health and social justice, both within and outside of Canada.
- Social determinants of health linked to human rights - **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**.

2004

- Romanow Commission releases its report on the **Health Care Reform System in Canada**
 - Health promotion not featured in recommendations
 - Canada Health Transfer recommended for accountability of spending on health care

2005

- **Canada Health Transfer** implemented
 - **Canada Social Transfer** falls out as what's left over from CHST
- **Public Health Agency of Canada** formed in response to SARS crisis
 - Health Promotion a key component of the agency
 - **National Collaborating Centre on Social Determinants of Health** announced for Atlantic Canada

2006

- Conservatives elected to minority government